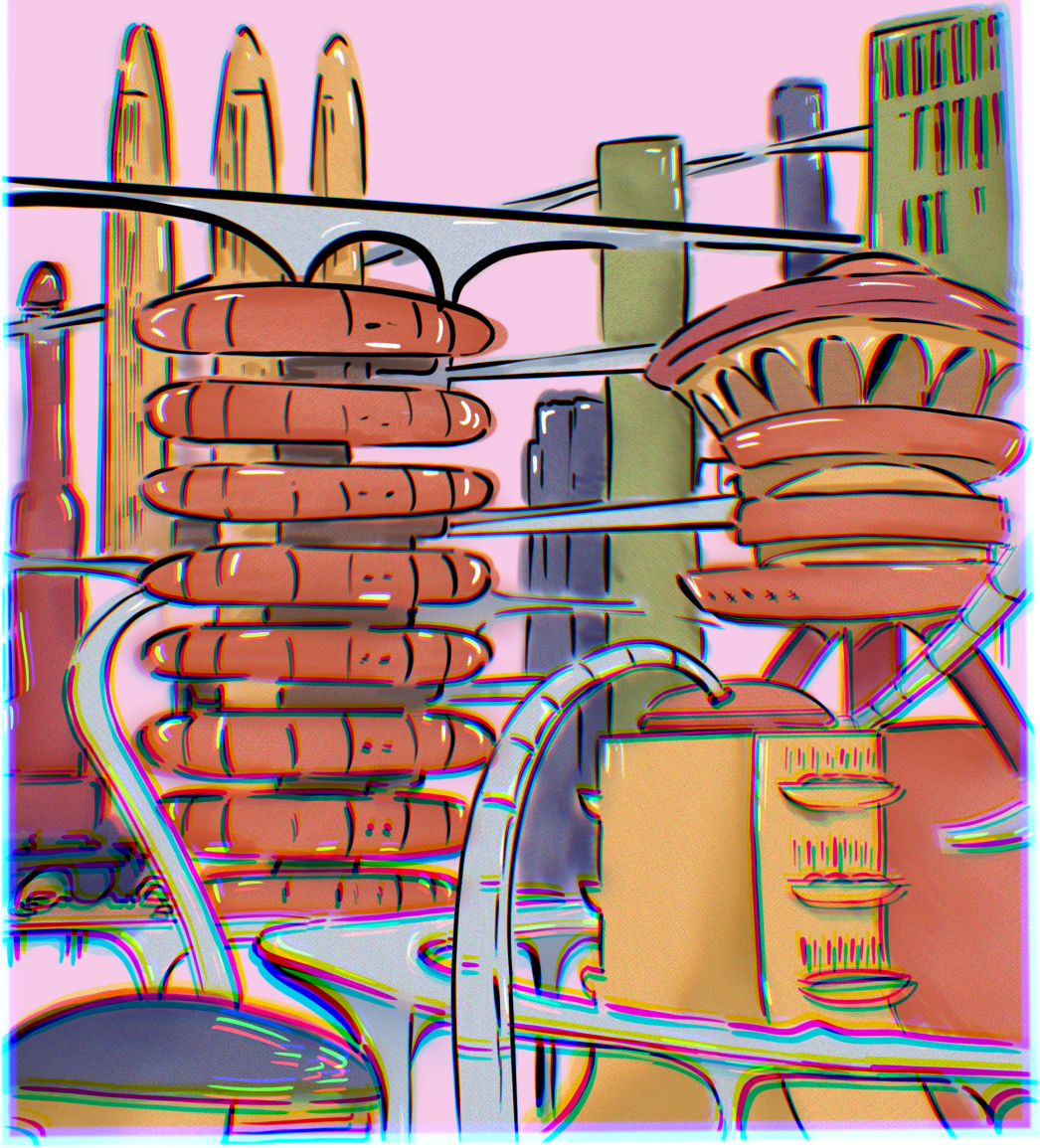
PINCH POINT

No. 7



ALFONSO LAFOSSE

From his love of illustration as a child, to his study of video game design, and now working as a freelance graphic designer, Alfonso Lafosse exemplifies the persistence required when pursuing a creative passion.

Despite his current focus on visual art, this path was never predetermined. Alfonso Lafosse had what he calls "a mental breakdown" recently reflecting on his art. “I looked at my art which I've been using for maybe two years, and I just went, oh my god. I absolutely hate this.”

However, this crisis also led to a new stylistic discovery. Alfonso found Alexander Rostov, an artist whose colour-saturated approach immediately resonated with him. “One face will have, like, 200 colours. I just saw it, and it just clicked it. I knew then that I wanted to do that.”

This tendency to draw direct inspiration from what is seen has defined Alfonso's work since he was a child.

“I used to be obsessed with, the TV, but when I was five, my parents said, “we're getting rid of the TV because we're losing you to it.” So they got rid of the antenna, and all I had left was the VHS player. So I would just pause a movie, and then draw that pause frame. And I did that with, I think, every single movie I had.”

This methodical practice eventually taught Alfonso how to formulate his own style.

“Other people say, “don't copy,” but I feel like that's the best way to learn. Because at some point you stop looking at the reference and you've found your own way of doing things.”

His self-directed philosophy extends beyond visual art into writing and game design. Born in Argentina in 2004, Alfonso moved to Australia at age 10 with only the English phrases “hello, how are you?” And “it's 8 o'clock”, forcing him into a major cultural transition. And today he splits himself between both countries, regularly travelling home to rural Argentina, while continuing to pursue his artistic goals in Australia, noting the distinct artistic culture of each.

“In Argentina, there are a lot more smaller communities that welcome smaller artists. Say, 20 artists who don't really have much money, but they put what they have together and rent out a gallery. Which I feel is similar to here, because I’ve seen a lot of collectives in each with people who have this dream, and they will not stop until they achieve it. But I think Australia makes it easier to balance, because you can have a part-time job and still pursue art, which means there’s a lot more space for creativity.”

Completing a range of freelance work, Alfonso also notes working closely with RotPunkt theatre collective. “I’ve done a bunch of posters for them. And I’m currently doing another series for an interactive play they run, where it’s just open bar, and all the acts are performed in different parts of the bar around the audience.”

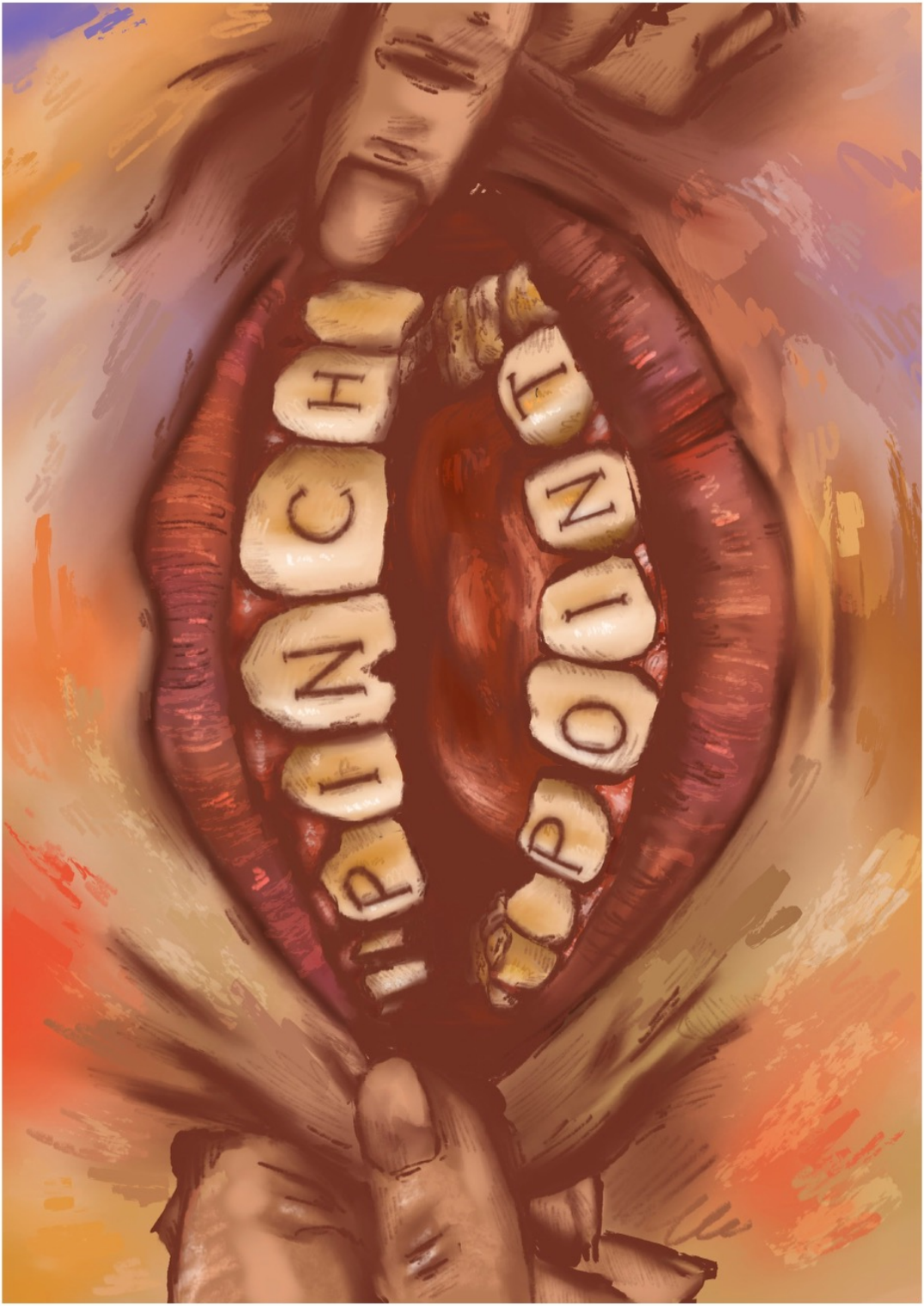
For Alfonso, the meditative function of creativity is what drives him to keep pursuing this career. “Doing art is very therapeutic. It's like meditation,” he says. “It's the one time where my brain doesn't have to work. It's just completely off — almost muscle memory.”

While his graphic design work provides various freelance opportunities, Alfonso also finds value in narrative, gravitating towards French authors who “find a way to romanticise everything.”

Now, as he begins to pursue new paths, Alfonso finds himself actively seeking what he calls, “a spot where there’s nothing, because that’s right where you fit in” — spaces where various worlds converge into something uniquely his own.

Working toward a new artistic direction influenced by Rostov's vivid approach while planning larger written projects, Alfonso continues to demonstrate the value of artistic adaptability and the power of self-directed creative evolution.

His work can be found on Instagram under: @alfonsolafosse.creative.


PINCH
POINT

Grace Vandals

Transitioning from her formal studies of jazz voice to embrace experimentation through alternative rock, Grace Vandals has already built a powerful musical identity that continues to advocate for authenticity and artist rights.

For those who knew her before, they would have seen her perform under her birth name, Grace Mensforth. However, as she moved away from her formal studies, Grace wanted to be recognised for her new musical avenue.

"I wanted something that would reflect this new chapter in my writing and in my music. But I also wanted something that I felt fit within the world of that music. So I decided to take my mum's maiden name, Van Der Sommen, which is a Dutch name, and I tweaked it a bit — made it a bit shorter, and rolled with it."

This rebranding accompanied a significant transition in her writing style which, while rooted in her jazz training, is also "very inspired by artists like Jeff Buckley, Feeble Little Horse, and more recently, a band out of Asheville, North Carolina called Wednesday." These inspirations echo through her debut album, *What Can I Burn Here?*, released in June of this year.

"That album was an accumulation of songs that I was writing from around the start or mid of 2023 to '24. The songs that I was writing felt like they were moving towards a start of a new chapter for my music, because they were very different to what I was writing previously. When I first decided to do a solo project, I thought that it was still going to be in the contemporary jazz world. But when I started writing, that's not what was coming out. And I think the more I wrote and the more experiences I had during that time kind of shaped that album, so I really ended up with a collection of songs that felt like they were telling my story over that period of time."

Through the production of this album, Grace worked closely with

The Helpmann Academy, receiving crucial support not only for her music production, but her various accompanying music videos. Her three songs, "Tobacco", "Wound We Share" and "Rewind to January" capture Grace's stylistic transition, with the latter two sharing a similar angelic motif that stems directly from her lyrics:

"In the chorus of 'Wound We Share', it mentions some imagery of shimmering wings. And that sparked an idea in my head of exploring the symbolism of an angel and everything that goes along with that story. But having also a dark, eerie feeling to it, and playing with that contrast of light and dark."

Beyond her solo Vandals project, Grace has also recently joined with established Adelaide band, *The Empty Threats*.

"It's been a really good learning experience, because *The Empty Threats* is much more established, and they know the lay of the land with touring and building a project, which has been really valuable to be a part of."

As Grace becomes a growing name within not only Adelaide's music scene, but Australia more broadly, she also emphasises the importance of musical ethicality and the role of us as listeners for supporting the artists we love.

"There's a lot to say about streaming right now. We've all known for a long time that Spotify doesn't support the artists nearly as much as they should, but with the recent news about military investment from the CEO of Spotify, I think it's really important to keep this conversation going. I think it's important to make a change if you have the means to. Say, if you're paying for a Spotify subscription, you have the means to use other platforms such as Tidal, which give a bigger percentage per stream to the artist. And if you're not aware of the impacts of Spotify and streaming on the industry, it really helps artists to educate yourself on how you can better support them, whether that's going to gigs, paying for merch, paying for their music on Bandcamp — if you have the means to do that. So, I feel like now is a really good opportunity to take advantage of this conversation and ask, "how we can better serve the arts community?""

Currently in a new writing phase for her solo project and preparing another release for early next year, Grace Vandals continues to leave a powerful mark on Australia's alternative music scene.

"I'm really passionate about developing a multidimensional world around my projects, incorporating both sonic and visual elements. Although I'm a musician first, visual arts are becoming increasingly exciting to me recently, and I feel like they're an authentic and equally important part of my practice."

SYCAMORE
Old Adelaide

Adelaide rock band *SYCAMORE* is back with their first single in nearly three years, "Old Adelaide," dropping September 11.

This track brings the band back to their nostalgic roots, wanting to create "a song that could actually remind us of a certain place and a certain time". Co-written by all members, the song draws from their collective influences while showcasing individual strengths—Steve's drumming, Henry's bass work, and collaborative lyricism of Chris and Ryan.

"Old Adelaide" marks a return to SYCAMORE's slower, more contemplative side, revisiting the territory of their early single, "Release".

"We really wanted to revisit that nostalgic vibe of 'Release'. So we hope it's one of those songs that you can just have on in the background and let it really connect you with something meaningful in Adelaide."

Despite their mellower approach to this single release, the band sees no chance of deviating from their roots in "upbeat rock", because it is in that "real head-banging" sound where they "feel [they] are truly *SYCAMORE*".

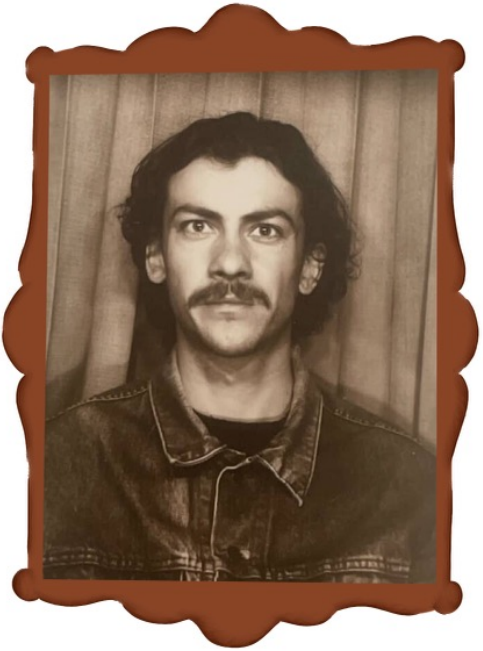
This release coincides with plans for additional singles later this year, bringing back their "rockier, mosh pit vibe" to their performances. For newcomers to SYCAMORE's music, the band promises to deliver "flat out music with storytelling and punchy choruses" — just the sound we want to hear filling our local venues.

The full interview can be found on *Pinch Point's* Instagram page: @pinchpointmag.

El Hombre de Valparaiso

Dante Siliquini

DANTE SILIQUINI



Dante Lauro Siliquini, otherwise known as Taccucino in the artistic world, draws direct inspiration from his Italian roots and European travels, yet still holds the heart of what it means to be an artist in Australia. While studying at the University of Adelaide and working part-time in hospitality, the 23-year-old is driven by his artistic dreams — something he considers more profound than "a hobby".

"I don't like to call it a hobby because I don't think it is. It's one of my passions. I think calling it a hobby pushes it to the side, but I don't want it to be. I want it to be a focus, just as much as the other pursuits in my life."

After his recent exchange in Barcelona, among various other European trips, Dante has become fully immersed in the "Eurocentric or Latin American-centric" style, connecting to Europe's modernist styles from Henri Matisse's fine pencil sketches of women, to the broader influence of Picasso. When looking at his work, this connection is undeniable.

"I've always been interested in people — they speak more to me than when the really abstract.... One figure I always like to paint is a Basque peasant with their berets, I think they're very interesting."

While maintaining this love for European art, Dante also acknowledges the tension between his identity as an Australian artist.

"I think Europe has definitely got a stranglehold on art, and if you want to be an artist, you will most likely go to Europe. But at the same time, there are a lot of contemporary artists like Albert Namatjira and Ben Quilty who focus on solely Australian narratives, and their work is absolutely beautiful. I haven't really delved into that. But I think there'll come a time where I'll switch gears and focus on Australian issues and Australian things."

His artistic identity has always been rooted in family. From his earliest memories with his grandfather, who would draw pictures for Dante and his sister to colour in, to his "artistically inclined father who paints very much abstract", and mother who has been consistently drawn to geometric design, both Dante and his sister "absorbed all of that through different means".

However, unlike the Rothko inspired works of his father, or abstract interests of his mother, Dante finds himself more drawn to the figurative, occupying a deliberate middle ground.

"I wouldn't call my work completely realistic, because I think it's definitely on the cusp of figurative. I hope people are able to distinguish the person in what I am drawing, but I don't want to go too far into the realistic, because I think I'd lose the potential essence of my pieces. I currently hold this aesthetic where it's as if the piece is attempting to say, "I am realistic, but at the same time I'm not".

This stylistic positioning serves his storytelling impulses. "When I draw, I'm mentally telling a story of whoever this person is."

These visual narratives are greatly inspired by his literary interests too. While writing short stories himself, Dante draws great inspiration from Italian author Natalia Ginzburg, whose work speaks to his experience of growing up in "a very beautiful but very discombobulated family."

"She makes the simple very beautiful and I think that's something that I try to do in my art as well. Because all the figures that I use are not necessarily prominent figures, but just regular individuals."

It wasn't until 2021 that Dante launched his Instagram account, *Taccucino,* to begin sharing his work with the world. The name itself embodies his European fascination, having intended to use the Italian word for notebook, "taccuino", but figurative works that bridge both worlds. misreading as "taccucino", this mistake has become his mark of originality.

Now, *Taccucino* functions as what Dante calls "a digital gallery," where he can share his passion and gain an instant platform for his work — a major advantage that previous generations of artists lacked.

Aspiring towards greater museum displays from the local Art Gallery of South Australia, to larger international modern art museums, Dante also celebrates the beauty of personalised artwork, looking to create pieces "that [he] can imagine in someone's home."

So, whether drawing Basque peasants from his Adelaide or travelling across Europe to gain greater inspiration, Dante Siliquini continues to navigate between European artistic tradition and contemporary Australian identity, creating figurative works that bridge both worlds.

Woman

Charlotte Joyner

Why didn't you say something?

I asked myself that too. Why not speak up when your gut tells you something isn't right about a person? Why not say something when the way he brushes your hand feels more personal than mistaken? Well, people today don't rely on gut instinct to make accusations. You have to wait for evidence.

But why didn't I say something when he made comments about my appearance and started to touch me more personally? Obviously I was overreacting. He didn't mean harm; he didn't know what he was doing. Maybe the constant influx of sexual assault cases in the media were making me more aware of a man's actions. Not the fact that they were true — I didn't consider that then — just the fact that the world was becoming aware.

When it went too far I had to say something though. If not for me, for the hundreds of other young girls who couldn't. I found the evidence — I had times to recall, incidents I could show and now, an undeniable fear within me when I entered that room. The problem was that no one listened.

Easy is always chosen over truth. And easy meant they would create their own narrative from what I told them. Diminish the trauma and segregate every incident as a simple misunderstanding. I wasn't clueless — I was a victim. I was a victim who now had to fight for the rights of all women. Speaking up doesn't just require responsibility over your experience, but gives you an intense responsibility for the protection of other women.

So I became a fighter and an advocate. I was no longer speaking for myself but for others. To try to instil some sort of change; stop the cycle and speak the truth. I just didn't realise how painful it would be.

Speaking about trauma doesn't become traumatic until you have to relive the experience again and again. Tell people, each day, the things that happened to you. Disclose every detail — where he touched you, how he touched you, when he touched you. It feels like living it again. Even when not speaking about it, it replays in your mind because again, you start to question yourself.

And then people start to listen. But this becomes more painful when the recounting of experiences becomes the reenacting of horrors. Film videos; take strangers to the very place it happened and be strong. For them — the girls who deserve more than you received.

It only seems to hurt though. To be told there isn't enough evidence; to be asked to recount every detail. What time did he touch you? Where did he touch you? Your left leg, I thought you said right? To reenact the scenes that keep you awake each night. What did he smell like? What were you wearing? What was he wearing? You said his pants were grey but we found out they were actually beige — now I'm a liar. Was anyone there? Did anyone notice? Find someone who was there. Did they remember anything? If not, then there's no hope for this case.

Why do I have to rely on the vision of others? Why do I have to constantly question myself to be heard? Why am I liable for every mistake? Every slip up, every misremembering? Why can't you just hear me when I say he touched me when he shouldn't have? Why can't you hear me when I say I'm scared to be around him, let alone any man? Why can't you see I'm not lying? Why can't you see me?

I returned to my classes six weeks later. He was still there, teaching new students — new girls he can try to grip his claws into. The night before returning, I didn't sleep. The moment I stepped foot onto the grounds, I felt myself begin to hyperventilate; palms sweating as my vision blurred. Before entering that room again, I threw up twice. After leaving that room, I threw up again. He wasn't physically there, but the memories were.

And after all, it was inconclusive. Nothing to be gained except an instilled fear within my body; a feeling of failure for myself and for the girls I was unable to protect.

So while you ask me, "why didn't you?", I'm asking you, "why would I?"

New Order
Power, Corruption and Lies

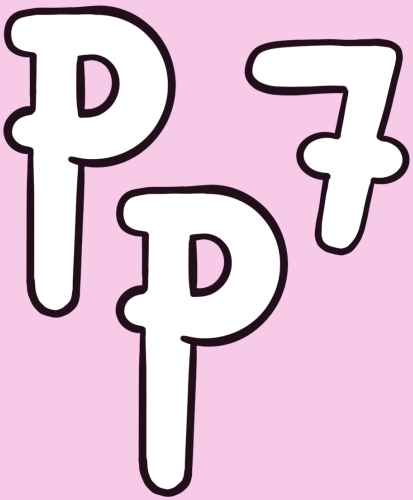
Emeralds
Does it Look Lie I'm Here?

Harmonia
Musik Von Harmonia

Tortoise
Millions Now Living Will Never Die

Bitchin Bajas
Bitchitronics

Noveller
Arrow



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